

NEWS RELEASE

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SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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For Immediate Release

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Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on August 11, 2005, **WILLIAM NICHOLSON**, age 37, of Marion, Illinois, was sentenced in United States District Court in Benton, Illinois. NICHOLSON, who had previously pled guilty to a one-count indictment charging him with unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon, was sentenced to 34 months' imprisonment, 3 years' supervised release, and was fined \$350.

The investigation established that, on October 15, 2004, NICHOLSON was in possession of three firearms at his Marion, Illinois, residence. NICHOLSON's sentence was enhanced because two of the firearms were stolen.

The investigation was conducted by the Williamson County Sheriff's Office, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, Marion Police Department, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms pursuant to their participation in the Williamson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals that use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson.